

MINUTES
Page 1 of 4
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
NOVEMBER 8, 2004
ALTERNATE SESSION

The Board of Selectmen convened in Alternate Session at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of the Town Hall. Dr. Solomon and Mr. Brownsberger were present.

Discussion of Special Town Meeting

The Board of Selectmen reviewed and discussed the final version of the Special Town Meeting warrant. The Board discussed the process by which they would consider the Board's position relative to the articles. They agreed they would discuss their positions on these articles immediately prior to the Special Town Meeting on Monday, November 29, 2004.

The Board moved: to approve the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

The motion passed unanimously (2-0).

The Board moved: to approve the motions under the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

The motion passed unanimously (2-0).

Appointment to Community Media Center Board of Conveners

The Board discussed a request for appointments to the Community Media Center Board of Conveners.

The Board moved: to appoint Barry Winston and Scott Stratford to the Community Media Center Board of Conveners.

The motion passed unanimously (2-0).

Other

Mr. Brownsberger inquired about a request by Fred Paulsen of the Uplands Advisory Committee to discuss certain matters with the Town Counsel.

The Board moved to enter executive session to discuss a matter related to criminal investigation; and further that the Board shall return to open session.

The motion passed unanimously, by roll call vote (2-0).

Convene Capital Planning Mega-Group

The Board of Selectmen convened the Capital Planning Mega-Group to discuss the status and planning related to large scale capital projects.

Jennifer Fallon of the Belmont High School Master Plan Committee provided an update of the committee's process to evaluate and develop a master plan for the renovation of the Belmont High School.

Ms. Fallon also offered an overview of the ESCo study to renovate Town and School buildings to implement energy efficiencies that would result in utility cost savings.

Mike Speidel of the Temporary Library Site Planning Committee made a presentation relative to a concept plan for the siting of the public library that would incorporate the construction of a new library, as well as the relocation of the Town's municipal pool.

Jil Wescott, Chair of the Library Trustees provided an overview of the Library Trustees and Friends of the Library's efforts to date with respect to the library project. She also described the process by which the Town can seek state grant funds to support the construction of the library.

Donna Griswold of the School Committee spoke on behalf of the Superintendent's Advisory Council on the Future of the Wellington School. She noted the importance of placing this project in advance of the High School.

Karen Pressey, Chairman of the Senior Center Building Committee, provided an update on the committee's activities relative to the completion of a schematic design for a new Senior Center on the former Kendall School site. Barbara Miranda of the Council on Aging and Bill Skelley of the Friends of the Council on Aging noted the fundraising effort they are about to kick off to seek private financial support for a portion of the Senior Center construction costs.

Patricia Brusch, of the Permanent Building Committee, reviewed the status of the following capital projects: 1) renovations to the Highway Yard, 2) renovations to the police station, 3) renovations to the ice skating rink, and 4) renovations of the White Field House.

The Board engaged in a discussion of the prioritization of the projects. Mr. Speidel reviewed his proposal to seek a Proposition 2 and 1/2 override for major capital projects with associated Special Purpose Stabilization Fund.

Mr. Brownsberger voiced his opposition to this type of funding instrument.

There was a general discussion regarding the prioritization of the various large scale capital projects.

Mr. Heigham and Mr. Widmer noted that if the town is not supportive of the Wellington School project immediately following the senior center, then the Town should not appropriate design funds at the Special Town Meeting. However, they support this sequencing of and the design funding for the project due to the high costs of repairs and maintenance at the Wellington.

Mr. Mooney noted his support for the Wellington School project and the appropriation of \$350,000 for architectural and engineering services.

Dr. Solomon noted a consensus that the Senior Center should be the next supported project, followed by the Wellington School.

Mr. Brownsberger expressed concern that the library proponents note the need to begin fundraising in the next five to seven years. He noted his support for the High School renovations to commence prior to the library.

Ms. Wescott clarified that the library proponents will match their fundraising efforts to their place in the funding queue.

The Board discussed the minimum private share of “public-private” projects (library, senior center, pool, rink, field house). Mr. Speidel expressed his opinion that 25% should represent the minimum private share contribution.

Dr. Solomon noted that the Town must wrestle with the fact that it appears that the library and the high school are proposed for similar construction timelines.

Mr. Widmer suggested that, because of the paucity of state funds, the Town should not turn its back on the grant round opportunity from the state for library funding because of the paucity of state funds.

Mr. Brownsberger concurred with Mr. Widmer’s statement and also noted that the library still has considerable work that it must undertake to garner the strong public support for this project.

Dr. Solomon summarized that there appears to be consensus that the projects should be placed in the following order: Senior Center, Wellington School, High School renovations, Library. He also noted support for the library to continue its efforts in pursuing its feasibility study and its intention to apply for state grant funding.

Mr. Brownsberger noted support for moving on the Senior Center project in 2005 and also noted that the Wellington School project is likely to commence within the next five years.

The Board agreed that it should convene the capital projects mega-group again in January or early February and that in the interim the Board shall decide what information is required from the various project proponents.

The Board moved: to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing negotiations with non-union personnel; and further that the Board shall not return to open session.

The motion passed unanimously (2-0), by roll call vote.

The Board adjourned its alternate session at 10:15 p.m.

Melvin A. Kleckner, Town Administrator
Clerk, Board of Selectmen